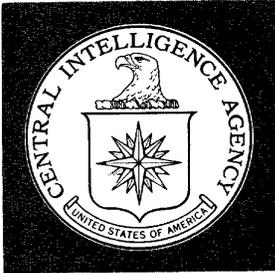


SENSITIVE

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WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 27 March 1971

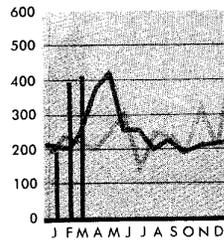
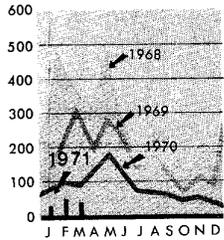
NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

For the President Only

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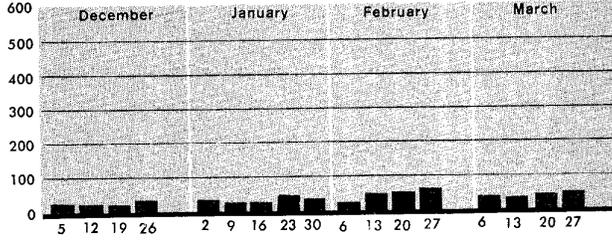
SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1971
Weekly average for each month



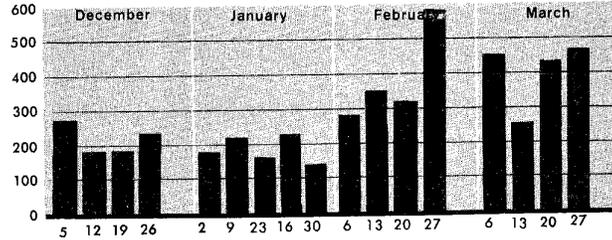
DECEMBER 1970 - MARCH 1971
Weekly data as reported

US BATTLE DEATHS



rose to 58 from the 54 of last week.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS

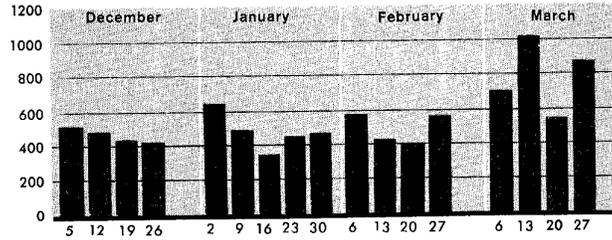
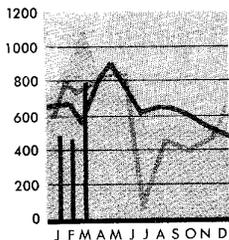


increased to 472 from last week's 444. Casualties continued to increase as the RVNAF completed their withdrawal from Laos. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.

25X3

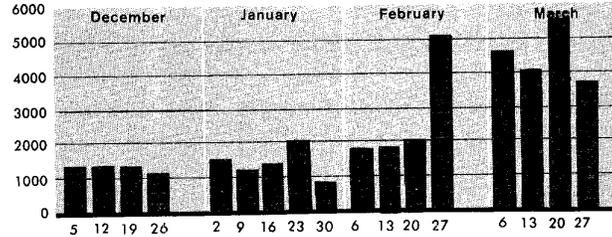
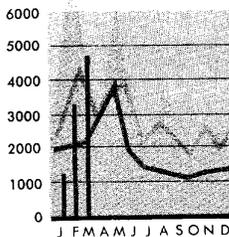
NSA

ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS



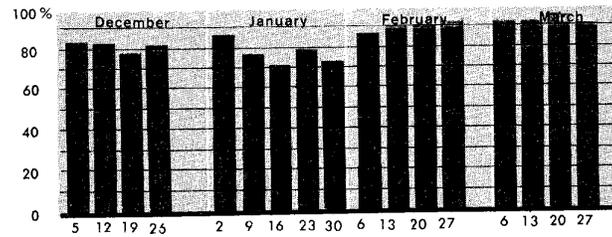
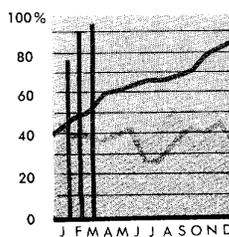
climbed to 872 from the 562 of last week. Attacks by fire and small-unit contacts rose in South Vietnam's MR 1 and MR 4.

ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION



dropped sharply from last week's 5,750 to 3,574 as large-unit contacts in Laos diminished during the RVNAF withdrawal phase.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS



as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces decreased to 93% from the high figure of 97% reached last week.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

Enemy-initiated activity in MR 1 increased during the week as the Communists launched numerous attacks by fire against lines of communication and installations supporting LAM SON 719. Friendly elements are deploying to brace against a possible enemy thrust into Quang Tri Province. Communist Front 4, MR 5, and B-3 Front elements continue extensive preparations for what they term "phase 1 of the spring campaign," with enemy communications reflecting several "open fire" times around 28/29 March. This offensive probably started in the Front 4 area with the rocket attack on Danang and in MR 5 with the heavy attack on a U.S. base southwest of Tam Ky. The Delta region of South Vietnam experienced an appreciable increase in attacks by fire and several outpost positions were lost to the enemy. During the coming week, the level of enemy activity is expected to increase in the central highlands and certain regions of northern South Vietnam, but it will probably decrease in the Delta.

In Cambodia, the Communists initiated action along Route 4 on 25 March. At present, the enemy controls the Pich Nil Pass and some 10 miles of the highway to the north. During the coming week, increased Communist pressure is expected against lines of communication in the southwest portion of Cambodia. Elsewhere, the Cambodians have launched a multi-battalion sweep operation north of Route 7 ultimately targetted against the Communist-controlled Chamcar Leu rubber plantation. Action in the area of ARVN's TOAN THANG 07/71 has been generally low but there have been attacks by fire against South Vietnamese positions, which, while causing only light casualties, have succeeded in destroying sizable stocks of ammunition and petroleum. The South Vietnamese units were scheduled to initiate the third and final phase of this operation over the weekend, before retiring to defensive positions along Route 7. A new communications network, apparently established to serve the enemy military region structure in Cambodia, has been isolated in communications intelligence. The control element, tentatively identified as the Vietnamese Communist/Khmer Communist Military Region Control, was previously a portion of Headquarters, South Vietnam Tactical Control.

In Laos, a government counteroffensive northeast and east of Luang Prabang has recaptured some ground. On the Long Tieng front, the enemy has maintained a high level of rocket and mortar fire on friendly positions. In south Laos, a government task force remains in the Muong Phalane area despite increasing enemy pressure. On the Bolovens Plateau, another government paramilitary site has fallen.

Enemy Infiltration

The current infiltration picture remains unclear but the stand-down in personnel inputs appears to be continuing. During the past week, no infiltration starts were detected in North Vietnam and only one small, specially-designated group with 17 personnel was observed in southern Laos. The lack of reflections of regular groups in the two General Directorate of Rear Services communications networks in Laos still available to us suggests that infiltration starts may have been halted as a result of Operation LAM SON 719. It is also possible that the North Vietnamese may have found it necessary to use personnel originally scheduled for southbound infiltration as fillers to flesh out units destined for the LAM SON area. Moreover, additional infiltration personnel were probably moved to southern North Vietnam where they remained available as replacements for anticipated personnel losses resulting from LAM SON. Based on available data, our tentative estimate of personnel moving toward South Vietnam/Cambodia since 1 October 1970 remains at some 48,300 - 49,800.

South Vietnam Developments

In a post-mortem report on LAM SON 719, the ARVN G-2 of MR 1 stated that the operation was a success and all but a few objectives were attained. However, he said that the enemy's opposition was greater than anticipated and he pointed to the volume and accuracy of the enemy's AAA and artillery, which, in part, forced ARVN units to become more mobile. As for ARVN performance, the officer had high

praise for the 1st Division, the Rangers and Marines, but he added that the Airborne did not do so well and suffered some defeats. Another ARVN source reported that an MR 1 Airborne officer went to Saigon and told President Thieu that the excessive friendly casualties were due to the mediocre leadership of General Lam, the overall LAM SON commander. According to this source, Thieu is considering replacing General Lam as MR 1 commander.

One leading civilian politician, the Secretary General of the Progressive Nationalist Movement, commented that the South Vietnamese people believe that the operation was a failure and blame President Thieu for it, regardless of whether or not the operation was actually a success. Also, an individual close to Big Minh said that Minh's entourage believes that the high ARVN casualties could not justify the operation. Such comment about LAM SON 719, pro and con, will undoubtedly increase in the near future. What is basically involved, however, is that most South Vietnamese politicians with axes to grind are going to try to figure how best they can employ LAM SON 719 as their whetstone.

Communist Developments

Lao Dong Party First Secretary Le Duan is leading the North Vietnamese delegation to the Soviet Communist Party 24th Congress in Moscow. In recent years, Le Duan attended other major Soviet gatherings and his presence is therefore not unprecedented. While in Moscow, he will almost certainly endeavor to mend USSR-DRV fences and assure the Russians that Hanoi has not swung completely into Peking's orbit.

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